



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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**NEW KEYSER-McCOOLE BRIDGE ON US 220 OPENS
WEDNESDAY FOLLOWING 11 A.M. RIBBON CUTTING**

Detour Begins Wednesday for Access between MD 135 and US 220

(October 22, 2012) – The new Memorial Bridge carrying US 220 (McMullen Highway) over the Potomac River between McCoole, Md. and Keyser, W.Va. will open to traffic Wednesday, October 24, following an 11 a.m. ribbon cutting ceremony, the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) and the West Virginia Department of Transportation-Division of Highways (DOH) announced.

The bridge is being replaced as part of a \$24 million joint project led by the West Virginia DOH, which began in spring 2010. The new bridge was constructed adjacent to the old bridge. Once traffic is shifted to the new bridge, crews will begin demolishing the old bridge and continue work on the roadway approaches to the bridge. Weather permitting, the entire project will be complete in spring 2013.

The ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on the West Virginia approach to the bridge, between Center Street and Armstrong Street. The ceremony will feature music by the Keyser High School band, remarks from public officials, a ribbon cutting, and a procession across the new bridge. Officials will also recognize a 99-year-old Keyser, W.Va. resident who was one of the first people to cross the old Memorial Bridge.

Wednesday will also mark the start of a temporary detour for access between US 220 and MD 135 (Queens Point Road) on the Maryland side of the bridge, using Crooks Avenue. Due to construction on the Maryland approach to the bridge, access to West Chesapeake Avenue from US 220 will be closed and traffic wishing to access MD 135 from US 220 or to access US 220 from MD 135 will be directed to use Crooks Avenue instead. During this period, crews will remove the portion of the old bridge that crosses over MD 135. After approximately two weeks, weather permitting, a new ramp between US 220 and MD 135 will open.

Questions about traffic and construction on the Maryland side of the bridge may be directed to SHA's District 6 Office at 301-729-8400. Questions about work on the bridge and in West Virginia may be directed to the West Virginia Department of Transportation Office of Communications at 204-558-0103.

(more)

While SHA and its partners work hard to maintain safe traffic mobility in work zones, each driver needs to actively modify his or her driving style to help prevent crashes. Stay alert – look for reduced speed limits, narrow driving lanes and highway workers. Slow down and don't follow too closely. *Safer Driving. Safer Work Zones. For everyone!*

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